



Utah Department of Public Safety
Division of Homeland Security

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Press Office

National Emergency Management Association

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Press Release

Wednesday, March 1, 2006

EMAC Touted in U.S. House Report on Katrina Response

Utah Sent 15 Responders to Gulf Coast Region Following Hurricanes

A little-known system, operated from and located in Lexington, Ky., has been praised in the recently released U.S. House report on Hurricane Katrina as one component of response that worked during the country's worst natural disaster. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which is a state-to-state mutual aid agreement that allows support across state lines when a disaster occurs, is responsible for deploying more than 65,916 people to the Gulf Coast, **including 15 individuals from the Utah Department of Public Safety's Communications Bureau and Division of Homeland Security.** EMAC is administered by the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), an affiliate of the Council of State Governments.

The report discusses the lack of quick decision-making in mobilizing resources during the Katrina disaster. However, it adds, "In contrast, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), a critical part of the national emergency management framework, successfully provided unprecedented levels of response and recovery personnel and assets to the Gulf coast in record time following Hurricane Katrina."

In the event of a major disaster in Utah, personnel and resources from other states could be deployed to assist our own state and local responders. "EMAC provides a benefit to our state in two ways," Public Safety Commissioner Robert Flowers said. "It provides individuals who are deployed to another state with valuable experience working in a disaster. It also provides us with a quick resource to supplement our own response efforts in the event of a disaster here in Utah."

The U.S. House report adds, "EMAC is designed by statute to be adaptable and scaleable to meet the changing needs of each event. EMAC was widely praised for its quick and effective process for putting vital resources into every aspect of the response."

The report also says that "Once activated, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) enabled an unprecedented level of mutual aid assistance to reach the disaster area in a timely and effective manner."

EMAC is neither a federal agency nor part of the federal government. It is an agreement among 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, to provide assistance across state lines when a disaster occurs.

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About EMAC

Established in 1996, EMAC was ratified by Congress and signed into law (Public Law 104-321). It is the first national disaster-relief compact to be ratified by Congress since the Civil Defense Compact of 1950. All members must pass state legislation approving their participation in EMAC. The compact is administered by the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA).

For more information on EMAC, please contact Angela Copple, EMAC Coordinator, at (859)244-8217 or via email at acopple@csg.org. Or visit the EMAC website at <http://www.emacweb.org>

For more information on NEMA, contact Karen Cobuluis, Meeting and Marketing Coordinator, at (859) 244-8143 or e-mail kcobuluis@csg.org.

NEMA is the association of professionals dedicated to enhancing public safety by improving the nation's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to our security. NEMA is an affiliate organization of The Council of States Governments, headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky.

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